

*Housing and Community  
Development Commission*

**Special Needs  
Committee Report**



June 2006

*Final Report and  
Recommendations*

# *Contents*

Background.....	1
Overview.....	1
Report Format.....	2
Accomplishments .....	2
Recommendations.....	3
Implementation Plan (from 2003) .....	5
Outcomes and Results since 2003 .....	6
♦ Accelerate Pipeline for Development of Special Needs Units for Hardest to House.....	6
♦ Expand Services Financing.....	7
♦ Develop and Strengthen Housing and Services Partnerships .....	9
♦ Short Term Rent Assistance Review .....	10
♦ Public Education and Advocacy .....	10
♦ Improve Access to Housing and Services .....	11
♦ Increased Income Supports for the Hardest-to-House.....	11
♦ Needs Assessment for Families with Special Needs Member(s) .....	12
♦ Needs Assessment for Unaccompanied Minors with Special Needs .....	13
Permanent Supportive Housing Units Pipeline from April 2004 – May 2006.....	Appendix I
Committees with missions that overlap the SNC .....	Appendix II
Special Needs Committee Participants.....	Appendix III

# Housing and Community Development Commission

## Special Needs Committee

### Final Report and Recommendations

#### June 2006

## Background

In 2001 the **Special Needs Committee (SNC)** of the Housing and Community Development Commission (**HCDC**) was created to:

- ♦ Assess the need for special needs housing countywide, including the specific needs of individual special needs populations.
- ♦ Coordinate housing and service resources to stimulate development of special needs housing.
- ♦ Develop hard, realistic, and measurable targets for additional housing for persons with special needs.
- ♦ Leverage new resource streams for special needs housing development and operations.
- ♦ Create models for special needs housing development and operation.
- ♦ Make policy recommendations to advance the development of special needs housing.

In 2002, the SNC was given a formal charge from the Multnomah County Commission, Portland City Council, and the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) Board. In July of 2003, the *Special Needs Committee Report* was issued to address the findings and recommendations requested by this formal charge. The report included a set of action steps for the SNC to accomplish between 2003 and 2005.

The *Special Needs Committee Report* focused mostly on the needs of adults without children. When the report was adopted in 2003, the SNC was charged with creating the Families with Special Needs Subcommittee (FWSN) to develop a similar report for families with children. The *Supplemental Report on Families With Special Needs* was completed in 2005 and will be presented to the Portland City Commission, Multnomah County, and HAP boards for adoption along with this report in 2006.

In late 2005, the SNC voted to create a final report to review the action steps from the 2003 report, detail accomplishments since 2003 in special needs housing, and make recommendations for future staff and committee work to continue to advance the development of special needs housing. This final report will be presented to HCDC, the Portland City Commission, Multnomah County Commission, and Housing Authority of Portland Board for adoption once completed. Once the reported is adopted, the SNC will disband.

## Overview

The SNC spurred unprecedented collaboration between the City of Portland, Multnomah County, affordable housing developers, and social service providers. The SNC is responsible for creating the relationships that led to numerous new initiatives and funding streams including *Home Again, A 10 year plan to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County*, ending chronic homelessness programs funded by grants from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and HUD/DOL, The **Corporation for Supportive Housing Taking Healthcare Home Initiative**, and **Bridges to Housing**. As this report will detail, virtually all of the recommendations and goals of the SNC have either been met or work toward meeting them will be continued by staff and committees once the SNC disbands. All of the accomplishments described in this report have not been attained by direct work of the SNC but the SNC provided the relationship and political capital needed to produce these results.

The ultimate accomplishment of the Special Needs Committee has been the fact that it sparked broad based, multi-jurisdictional acceptance of the notion that providing affordable housing and services together for special needs populations is more efficient and effective for everyone.

## Report Format

*The Special Needs Committee Final Report* shows the following:

- ◆ Overview of Accomplishments
- ◆ Recommendations
- ◆ Stated Goals from the *SNC Implementation Plan* (2003)
- ◆ Desired Outcomes from the *SNC Implementation Plan* (2003)
- ◆ Results to date (June 2006)

The report will begin with an overview of some of the key accomplishments of the committee, followed by a set of recommendations that the committee wants to insure are continued. Appendices include a matrix of ongoing workgroups and committees, a list of housing units developed or added to the pipeline during the work of the SNC, and a list of the participants for the Special Needs Committee.

## Accomplishments (2003-2006)

- ◆ The *Special Needs Committee Report* provided a template for the needs and recommendations regarding special needs housing. This document has been a roadmap and resource generating aid since it was written.
- ◆ The *Supplemental Report on Families with Special Needs* provided research to document the number of homeless families, the number of homeless children, and the inadequate supply of housing linked to services for families with Special Needs. The *Supplemental Report on Families with Special Needs* will be presented to City of Portland and Multnomah County Commissions.
- ◆ **Corporation for Supportive Housing Taking Healthcare Home Initiative** provided \$700,000 over two years for systems change efforts, then was renewed at a reduced funding level for two more years.
- ◆ *Home Again, the City of Portland/Multnomah County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*, was created and adopted by the City of Portland and Multnomah County Commissions.
- ◆ The Interagency Council on Homelessness and HUD/DOL grants provided \$9.2 million for housing and services to chronically homeless adults.
- ◆ **The Fresh Start Program** and **Landlord Guarantee Fund** were implemented to encourage landlords to rent to persons with poor rental histories with a guarantee of supportive services from a designated agency and compensate landlords in case of unit damages or failure to pay rent.
- ◆ In 2004, 2005, and 2006, the City of Portland issued approximately \$5 million in HOME and CDBG funds with an emphasis on permanent supportive housing. The solicitations were designed collaboratively with Multnomah County and HAP and combined capital resources with Project Based Section 8, Weatherization funds, and Multnomah County service commitments.
- ◆ Training for housing providers, service providers, and underwriters about how to develop and operate PSH.
- ◆ Short term rent assistance consolidated under a single agency.
- ◆ Multnomah County provided funding for intensive community services and 55 units of supportive housing in the **Community Engagement Program** of Central City Concern.
- ◆ **Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS)** implemented in 37 agencies serving homeless persons and families.
- ◆ During 2005, the first year of the *10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*, 660 homeless adults and 407 homeless families were placed into permanent housing.
- ◆ 436 units of PSH in pipeline with another 122 in development, project examples include:

- **Midland Commons** – 44 units for severely mentally ill adults built on land made available by Multnomah County.
- **Prescott Terrace** – 47 units developed for severely mentally ill adults coming from chronic homelessness, state psychiatric hospitals, or prisons. Services co-funded by Multnomah County Mental Health and Addictions Services Division Department of Community Justice.
- ◆ A **Key Not A Card** initiative provided \$850,000 in City of Portland General Funds for tenant based rent assistance to house chronically homeless adults and families.
- ◆ The **Bridges to Housing** program is in development. Multnomah County committed \$1 million in general funds for services and the City of Portland committed \$5 million in HOME and CDBG for capital over a five-year period. Neighborhood Partnership Fund was selected as the administrative entity to seek foundation funding to expand the program.
- ◆ The **Community Development Network (CDN) Permanent Supportive Housing Project** will create strategies for removing technical, legal, and systemic barriers to the development of PSH and unify funders and developers in the goal of increasing PSH production.
- ◆ **Project Homeless Connect** served over 900 homeless persons in January 2006 and Project Homeless Families Connect is planning to serve 300 homeless families in July 2006.

## Recommendations

1. **Resources** must be expanded for Services and Housing for Persons and Families with Special Needs.
  - Advocate at state and federal level for service dollars for persons and families with special needs. This must continue to be a priority, particularly for the Multnomah County agencies that administer the service programs and rely heavily on State and Federal funding for critical services.
  - Increase the amount of tenant and project based rent subsidies available for Permanent Supportive Housing.
    - ◆ Develop new funding for permanent supportive housing for hard to house families with special needs.
    - ◆ Expand and continue funding for permanent rent subsidies. This is a **Key Finding**.

**Careful analysis of the costs of permanent supportive housing has demonstrated that even a debt free affordable housing project cannot afford to operate on the amount of rent a person or family with only SSI or TANF as income without a rent subsidy. In other words, we can buy a residence for persons and families at very low income and they still cannot afford to live in it without additional subsidy.**

Many individuals and families have been placed into permanent housing with rent subsidies that are not permanent. Resources must be made available to insure that these individuals and families do not lose their housing in the future.

- ✓ Increase resources to help individuals and families obtain increased income from employment and/or entitlements so rent can be paid after subsidies end, AND...
- ✓ Increase resources to extend rent subsidies permanently for individuals and families unable to generate enough income to sustain unsubsidized rent payments.

- ♦ Explore ways to use current housing and services resources more efficiently by pairing them together in Permanent Supportive Housing.
  - ♦ Expand local funding sources for permanent supportive housing including State Housing Trust Fund, City of Portland Housing Investment Fund, and Multnomah County Bridges to Housing.
2. **Policy** direction must support the development of a continuum of supportive housing options for persons and families with Special Needs.
- ♦ Insure that persons and families with special needs who don't meet chronically homeless definitions also have access to Permanent Supportive Housing. Many of the current federal resources for housing and service efforts are focused on chronically homeless individuals. The broader group of people and families with special needs includes this group but is not limited to it.
  - ♦ Guarantee local representation on the State Interagency Homeless Council created by Governor Kulongoski on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
  - ♦ Continue to align Multnomah County funded services with affordable housing whenever possible and prioritize funding for services aligned with affordable housing during budget deliberations.
  - ♦ Prevent homelessness for families at risk through short term economic and service interventions. This is much less costly than re-housing homeless families and provides more stable environments for children.
  - ♦ Insure that populations that have not been specifically studied with regard to homelessness and the need for permanent supportive housing receive attention and that the systems that serve them are engaged. This includes unaccompanied youth and seniors.
  - ♦ Preserve shelter and transitional housing. Shelter and transitional housing are critical components of a continuum of strategies for ending homelessness in persons and families with special needs. It is important that the current capacity be maintained while new resources are directed toward permanent supportive housing.
3. **Collaboration** between agencies and partners responsible for Persons and Families with Special Needs in order to develop the needed continuum of supportive housing options.
- ♦ Expand relationships with State agencies. State agencies such as the Department of Human Services, the Office of Medical Assistance Programs, and Seniors and Persons with Disabilities are critical partners in local efforts to end homelessness for persons and families with special needs that have not been directly engaged in local special needs housing planning efforts to the degree that is necessary for success in meeting our goals.
  - ♦ Partner effectively with the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP). The Housing Authority is the largest provider of long term rent assistance and affordable housing in our community. HAP is critical to maintain as an active partner in creating Permanent Supportive Housing.
  - ♦ Preserve the existing network of services and housing for persons and families with special needs. The current environment of collaboration between housing and services entities is critical to efforts to create permanent supportive housing for persons and families with special needs.

## Plan for Implementing Special Needs Committee Recommendations & Corporation for Supportive Housing Systems Change Grant 2003

*The Special Needs Committee will:*

1. *Meet 6 times in next 12 months;*
  - ♦ *Oversee implementation of SNC Report Recommendations;*
  - ♦ *Provide accountability for implementation of SNC Report recommendations;*
2. *Accept progress reports on the following activities, described in more detail below, and evaluate progress towards goals:*
  - ♦ *Accelerate Pipeline for Development of Supportive Housing for the Hardest to House*
  - ♦ *Expand Services Financing*
  - ♦ *Develop and Strengthen Housing and Services Partnerships*
  - ♦ *Rent Assistance Review*
  - ♦ *Public Education and Advocacy*
  - ♦ *Improve Access to Housing & Services*
  - ♦ *Increase Income Supports for the Hardest-to-House*
  - ♦ *Needs Assessment for Families with Special Needs Member(s)*
  - ♦ *Needs Assessment for Unaccompanied Minors with Special Needs\*\**
3. *Build political relationships, so that it will have the ability to bring political pressure to bear to address barriers to implementation;*
4. *Link with Citizens Commission to End Homelessness, as a resource and through a structural integration of a core group of SNC members and the Coordinating Committee of the Ending Homelessness Initiative;*
5. *Link with the Resource Development Blue Ribbon Panel, by providing data on need, assisting in advocating for additional resources, and in other ways to be determined;*
6. *Report to HCDC;*
7. *Continue public education and advocacy efforts;*
8. *Coordinate data collection with CSH efforts.*

*Co-chairs Linda Kaeser and Jim McConnell; lead Staff: Beth Kaye*

## Accelerate Pipeline for Development of Special Needs Units for the Hardest to House

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ◆ *Produce 400 new units of supportive housing in two years.*
- ◆ *Ensure that housing development pipeline will address estimated need for creation of additional supportive housing.*
- ◆ *Identify the best ways to spend BHCD capital, project-based Section 8, other City of Portland and state resources (e.g. TIF, new resources) etc. to develop new units as quickly as possible. Production goals, financing protocols, RFP's.*
- ◆ *Identify what it takes to underwrite hard-to-house development.*
- ◆ *Explore rent buy-downs to meet need for affordable supportive housing.*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*An increase in the number of supportive housing units; an increase in the number of people with special needs who are housed (focus on hardest-to-house first).*

### Results

...June 2006

By March 2006, 436 units of permanent supportive housing had been created or were in the pipeline. The *Home Again Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness* contains larger permanent supportive housing goals of 1600 units for adults and 600 units for families that will be closely tracked for nine more years. Since 2004, the City of Portland's spring RFP for capital development funds has been coordinated with Multnomah County in an effort to steer the funds toward permanent supportive housing. In 2005, the City of Portland issued a permanent supportive housing bond that made \$11 million in capital dollars available beyond the usual federal HOME and CDBG resources. In 2005, the HUD McKinney Bonus allocation process that provides rental subsidy dollars for chronically homeless adults was coordinated with Multnomah County and with the 2005 City of Portland spring RFP. Local providers were awarded two grants to provide a Housing First model for chronically homeless adults called the **Community Engagement Program (CEP)**. Multnomah County funded a third **CEP** team. Together, the teams have placed over 200 persons into permanent supportive housing.

In 2004, the City of Portland, with multiple partners from SNC, was awarded \$700,000 over two years from the Corporation for Supportive Housing to conduct systems change activities in the way services and housing are funded in order to create more permanent supportive housing. This grant contained a goal of creating 400 units of permanent supportive housing and was a vehicle for implementing the recommendations of the SNC. After two successful years, the grant has been renewed for two more years through 2008.

In late 2005, the Community Development Network (CDN), an association of community development agencies in the Portland/Multnomah County area, hired a consultant, with funds from the CSH grant, to lead the **CDN Permanent Supportive Housing Project**. The CDN PSH Project is a series of workgroups on the creation of permanent supportive housing. The purpose of the workgroups is to create templates for overcoming the barriers to the creation of permanent supportive housing and provide technical assistance to CDN members in this regard. In February 2006, CSH provided training on the underwriting of permanent supportive housing to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), the Portland Development Commission (PDC), HAP, City of Portland, and Multnomah County staff. The Funders Committee will be formed in 2006 in order to insure that the City of Portland, Multnomah County, State, and PDC

move toward better coordination of housing, services, and rental subsidy funds and the unified goal of creating permanent supportive housing.

**By January 2006, Bridges to Housing** had pledges of over \$8 million for housing and services to special needs families. The City of Portland of Portland and Multnomah County provided the majority of this funding. Additional funds for Bridges to Housing will be sought from local and national foundations including the Gates Foundation and Meyer Memorial Trust.

The recommendation to use rent subsidy to buy down the rent of private market and 50-60% units for PSH has been widely implemented. The City of Portland's Key Not a Card program of 2005 released \$850,000 in general funds for tenant based rental subsidy funds. This, along with Shelter Plus Care, has been used to place 235 individuals and families into private market and other units not affordable to persons with very low or no income. Rent buy down is also an eligible use of the City of Portland spring affordable rental housing RFPs for 50-60% units willing to serve lower income populations.

**Prescott Terrace** is a unique PSH project that opened in late 2004. Prescott Terrace is a 47-unit project serving severely mentally ill adults from chronic homelessness, prisons, and state psychiatric hospitals. **Prescott Terrace** had service dollars and target populations in place before the property was identified and capital budget in place. The project is a unique collaboration using services funds from Multnomah County Department of Community Justice and Mental Health and Addictions Services.

The SNC was extremely effective at starting the permanent supportive housing movement locally. The 10 year plan, work of the CDN consultant, and continuation of the CSH grant all provide the infrastructure needed to insure that this work will continue for many years.

## Expand Services Financing

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ◆ *Identify and implement new ways to leverage Medicaid, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), VA services, and other state and federal resources to provide services for the hardest-to-house and improve access to housing + services.*
- ◆ *Take FQHC to scale to provide outreach and treatment (including ACT teams) coordinated with housing for all homeless persons with disabling health conditions.*
- ◆ *Oversee CSH 'bridge' grant for FQHC expansion.*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*An increase in the number of people who receive wrap-around services to support their housing; an increase in federal Medicaid dollars flowing to Multnomah County; an increase in the number of chronically homeless people who are in supportive housing.*

### Results

...June 2006

Led by Multnomah County and funded by the CSH grant, the Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation (OTAC) was hired to examine options for expanding services funding for special needs housing. During this effort, Multnomah County experienced significant reductions in the amount of Medicaid funds received due to large State and Federal cuts. This created a climate where the expansion of Medicaid funds through FQHC or Targeted Case Management was simply not possible.

The work of the committee and OTAC was successful at outlining ways to leverage Medicaid funds for supportive housing in the future as funding constraints resolve. Recommendations included working to expand the Medicaid Provider Tax for Mental

Health Organizations, working with the State to increase rates for Medicaid mental health services through the Oregon Health Plan, and looking at ways to use Developmental Disability Services to support their clients in housing.

One of the actions taken with the CSH Grant was to fund a Federally Qualified Health Center expansion at the Bridgeview Community. The program was unable to generate self-sustaining Medicaid funding due to the state cuts that dramatically reduced the number of persons covered by the Oregon Health Plan. This is another good template for future efforts that might be more successful in better funded times.

Bridges to Housing received a \$1 million commitment from Multnomah County to fund services in the first Bridges to Housing projects for homeless Special Needs Families. These funds will be used as leverage to solicit financial participation from foundations.

Despite the obstacles caused by federal and State cuts, there have been significant gains in funding for services in permanent supportive housing:

- ◆ The Multnomah County I-Tax was a temporary backfill for the loss of state funding that supported the following programs:

“Tina” was referred to Central City Concern’s **Community Engagement Program** in February 2005 when she was being evicted from her housing due to disruptive behaviors. In the year prior to entering **CEP**, Tina had moved 10 times between the streets, hotels (mostly publicly subsidized) and permanent residences until she was placed into permanent supportive housing by **CEP**. Tina had a history of more than 15 psychiatric hospitalizations including a suicide attempt that left her legally blind, numerous emergency room visits, and legal problems. Tina’s **CEP** case manager began meeting with her daily, going to her residence and walking with her to and from the program for groups and activities. Within a few months, Tina began regularly attending treatment groups, utilizing community supports, and stopped using substances. During the year that she has been with **CEP**, she has maintained her permanent housing with no problems, reunited with her children, has had no psychiatric hospitalizations, no emergency room visits, and has facilitated peer run groups at the **CEP**. She became friends with another program participant; they began dating and are now engaged.

- ✓ Increase in supportive services at Cascadia’s Bridgeview Community.
- ✓ Multnomah County funding for one of Central City Concern’s Community Engagement Program Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.
- ✓ The creation of an indigent mental health services program to serve homeless mentally ill persons and prevent mentally ill persons from becoming homeless, incarcerated, or hospitalized.
- ✓ In-home services through the Aging and Disability Services Division for persons at risk of losing their housing due to physical disabilities.
- ✓ Flexible funds for medication, or short term rent assistance to prevent loss of housing for mentally ill or physically disabled adults.
- ✓ The Community Based Services Team was created to do outreach, treatment readiness, and care coordination for chronically homeless persons who are frequently arrested.
- ◆ Creation of four ACT teams using existing Medicaid funds.
- ◆ Creation of the Home-based Stabilization Program to provide intensive in-home supports to prevent loss of housing for mentally ill adults at risk of hospitalization.
- ◆ Two federal grants for housing and services to chronically homeless adults in a Housing First model.
- ◆ Increase of 27 units of PSH for special needs families bringing the total to 136.

In 2005...

An amazing 660 chronically homeless adults and 407 homeless families moving off the streets of Portland and Multnomah County.

The creation of the Multnomah County housing team, the DCHS permanent Supportive Housing Coordinators, the development of Bridges to Housing, and the involvement of the Multnomah County housing director guarantee that this valuable work will continue.

## Develop and Strengthen Housing and Services Partnerships

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ◆ *Provide oversight in the expansion of Fresh Start.*
- ◆ *Manage Technical Assistance resources for housing providers interested in hard-to-house capacity building.*
- ◆ *Develop cross-training curriculum for service and housing provider management and staff to promote successful housing of hardest-to-house.*
- ◆ *Promote Housing Provider/Multnomah County Manager joint planning/ info sharing.*
- ◆ *Develop strategies for bridging homeless people into newly developed projects.*
- ◆ *Build capacity/disburse CSH funding.*
- ◆ *Devise ways to share information about hardest-to-house individuals to improve their access to services and success in housing while respecting their right to privacy.*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*Affordable housing providers serve larger numbers of hardest-to-house. Housing and service provider staff develop skills to improve housing success of hardest-to-house tenants. Information about clients can be shared in a way that supports their success in housing and respects their privacy.*

### Results

...June 2006

Four tasks were completed by the Housing and Services Partnership Committee before it disbanded in 2004.

- ◆ The Fresh Start program is now adopted with 10 agencies certified as Fresh Start agencies and 15 persons whose placements were secured using the landlord guarantee fund. The program was not utilized as much as was originally thought, and reasons for that are being considered along with some changes to the program to increase utilization. The soft rental market might be one of the reasons for the low utilization.
- ◆ Trainings were held in 2004 and 2005 on coordinating property management and services in permanent supportive housing, outreach to the hardest to reach homeless, and fair housing.
- ◆ Matchmaking events were held in 2004 to bring housing and service providers together, and this work continues in the CDN Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) planning process.
- ◆ Capacity grants went to 5 housing providers in 2004 and 2 service providers in 2005. One more service provider was given a capacity grant in 2006.

The relationships needed to create PSH are being developed on an ongoing basis by the DCHS PSH Coordinators, Multnomah County Housing Director, and CDN PSH planning group.

Information sharing is being fostered through the implementation of HMIS and the Multnomah County staffing of the Homeless Alcohol and Drug Intervention Network (HADIN) meetings. HADIN is a meeting where homeless persons with barriers to successful treatment and housing are discussed between the agencies involved in their

care. Summary reports and systems issues are forwarded to the Outreach and Engagement Workgroup for further discussion and recommendations. The Vulnerable and Homeless Outreach Network (VAHON), another interagency meeting between outreach workers serving homeless persons, meets semi-monthly and is exploring ways to be able to share information about specific individuals served by multiple agencies. A similar information-sharing group should be created for agencies serving homeless families.

The CDN PSH workgroup is developing strategies for integrating more homeless persons and families into housing developed by CDCs.

### Short-term Rent Assistance Review

#### Stated Goals

...July 2003

*Rental assistance programs are flexible and responsible, and funds are deployed to prevent homelessness.*

#### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*Increase in number of households that do not become homeless and achieve housing stability as a result of receiving short-term rent assistance.*

#### Results

...June 2006

The Short Term Rent Assistance committee created a report with recommendations to improve and streamline the many rent assistance programs. An inter-jurisdictional group worked to select a single provider to manage all rent assistance programs. HAP was selected for this and the programs are currently being transitioned to them for management. An RFP for rent assistance resources is being designed for release in fall 2006 for implementation July 1, 2007.

### Public Education and Advocacy

#### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ♦ *Develop a public information strategy to increase public support for housing the hardest-to-house.*
- ♦ *Continued advocacy about need for SN housing and for resources to house the hardest-to-house.*
- ♦ *Break the information barrier between housing and services.*

#### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*Increase public support for housing the hardest-to-house; consensus that we can end homelessness; increased public support for new resources for housing the hardest-to-house.*

#### Results

...June 2006

**Project Homeless Connect** served over 900 homeless persons in January 2006 with over 400 community volunteers. Project Homeless Connect is an opportunity for the larger community to interact with and provide help to homeless people. Many jurisdictions have used this model to solicit community, local business, and local political support for ending homelessness. The Mayor of Portland, Multnomah County Sheriff, County and City Commissioners, and State representatives and Senators were among the volunteers alongside community and business leaders. Services included medical, vision, legal, dental, housing, mental health, and many other critical services for homeless persons. Multnomah County is leading the effort to follow this event with the nation's first **Project Homeless Families Connect** using the homeless connect event model to serve homeless families. This event will be held in July 2006. Plans include holding each event once annually in the future.

Many groups currently advocate for special needs housing. These include Affordable Housing Now, the Housing Alliance, HAP 504 disability advisory board, the Coalition for Homeless Families, Community Alliance of Tenants, and the workgroups of the 10-year plan.

There is concern that advocacy for public support for people with special needs will not continue at the level needed without a specific group dedicated to this. Multnomah County needs to continue to advocate for the service dollars for special needs populations. HCDC and Multnomah County staff need to continue to make this a priority.

## Improve Access to Housing and Services

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ◆ *Discharge planning*
- ◆ *Outreach*
- ◆ *Prevention*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*Increase in number of people with special needs who are discharged from institutions (including hospitals and jail) into permanent affordable housing, with a culturally competent comprehensive service plan. Increase in number of people who are able to access Housing and Services. Increase in number of people who have access to benefits from state, federal, and V.A..*

### Results

...June 2006

The Discharge Planning Group met for several months and had a very broad membership. A series of brown bag lunches were held to have presentations from multiple agencies that do forms of discharge planning. The group shared best practices for discharge planning and developed minimum standards for discharge planning, including the development of a universal discharge planning form.

The Outreach and Engagement Workgroup continues to meet to coordinate outreach efforts and address systemic barriers to moving homeless people off the streets. The new Short Term Rent Assistance program managed by HAP will provide resources and flexibility that allows agencies to greatly improve their ability to prevent homelessness in their service populations.

The Community Based Services Team of Multnomah County Mental Health and Addictions Services Division provides outreach, prevention, and discharge planning for chronically homeless persons frequently booked into the Multnomah County Jail. The Community Based Services Team has been successful in connecting some of the hardest to serve persons with housing and services.

Ms. A is a forty five year old African American woman. She was first contacted by the **Community Based Services Team (CBS)** in January of 2004. Ms. A had ninety arrests over a ten-year period prior to contact with **CBS**. Ms. A suffers from crack cocaine addiction and a brain injury resulting from a gunshot wound. CBS began contacting Ms. A on the streets, Community Court, and her primary healthcare clinic that serves homeless persons. Ms. A was connected with mental health and addictions treatment at Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare Inc. and her family arranged for her to have a social security payee. Ms. A was placed into permanent supportive housing in 2005 and has only had 1 arrest since then.☺

## Increase Income Supports for the Hardest-to-House

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

- ♦ *Improve success rate of applications for SSI, SSDI, Veteran's pensions services, and other income maintenance programs for hardest-to-house individuals.*
- ♦ *Decrease time for qualification for these benefits.*
- ♦ *Maximize use of Department of Agriculture food and nutrition programs for programs serving hardest-to-house.*
- ♦ *Maximize use of Vocational Rehab and Employment and Training programs for hardest-to-house.*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*An increased number of people with special needs who are unable to work receive income supports that can be spent to support good nutrition and housing stability. Individuals with special needs who are able to work receive targeted training; join the work force and progress towards economic self-sufficiency.*

### Results

...June 2006

The proposed committee was never formed but three significant efforts were implemented that continue today. The TANF Work Group did form to begin to address these issues but the group has not met recently.

The three significant efforts are the **Joint Access to Benefits** program, the chronic homelessness working group's oversight of the HUD/Department of Labor grant to Worksystems Inc. and Central City Concern, and BHCD's economic opportunity grants.

- ♦ **Joint Access to Benefits** is a partnership between Multnomah County service providers, the criminal justice system, and the Social Security Administration. The Multnomah County Department of Community Justice has taken the lead on this project, which has streamlined access to medical coverage and SSI for persons with special needs with a focus on persons leaving institutions. To further this effort statewide, the State Office of Mental Health and Addictions Services received a federal grant to train case managers around the state on how to help their clients access Social Security benefits efficiently.
- ♦ The Chronic Homelessness Working Group provides project oversight to Worksystems Inc. and Central City Concern in their federally funded effort to employ chronically homeless adults. In addition, SE Works received a Department of Labor grant to provide employment, services, and housing to offenders with special needs transitioning from prisons.
- ♦ BHCD has given economic opportunity grants to 32 projects. Fifteen of these projects serve homeless or at-risk populations by providing supported employment opportunities, training programs, and micro-enterprise grants.

## Needs Assessment for Families with Special Needs Member(s)

### Stated Goals

...July 2003

*Assess number of extremely low-income families with special needs in Multnomah County; identify their distinctive housing and service needs; identify resources.*

### Desired Outcomes

...July 2003

*Make detailed recommendations for meeting the Housing & Services needs of this population. Integrate those recommendations into SNC Recommendations and, where appropriate, into 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.*

**Results**

...June 2006

In March 2004, the Special Needs Families Work Group was formed. It included eighteen members and was chaired by Jean Demaster of Human Solutions. By June 2005, the group completed a supplemental report to the original Special Needs Committee Report of July 2003. The “Supplemental Report: Families with Special Needs” provided an estimate the number of homeless families in Multnomah County with special needs, a description of the needs of homeless families with special needs, and a series of recommendations specific to the needs of homeless parents and children. The report attempted to identify the number of homeless families with special needs who have involvement in the foster care system and strengthen relationships with the networks that assist survivors of domestic violence.

Beginning August 2003, a group of staff from Multnomah County, Clark County, the City of Portland and the Housing Authority of Portland came together to explore creating a totally new concept – a regional program to help high need homeless families overcome their barriers to stability.

Shortly thereafter **Bridges To Housing** was born, and the planning began to include all four counties in the Portland region. Research showed that there is a cohort of homeless families that struggle with significant barriers that cause them to become homeless repeatedly. Typically these barriers include Special Needs, or disabilities. The families’ success is increasingly compromised over time by repeated evictions, criminal histories and medical concerns.

Bridges to Housing has evolved into a program concept that *intervenes with high resource using (special needs) families by providing permanent affordable housing coupled with intensive transitional (two-year) case management services and child care.*

Multnomah County has dedicated \$1 million to Bridges To Housing, which will be allocated to housing+service providers during 06-07. Other jurisdictions have committed to contributing to Bridges to Housing. We look forward to developing *region-wide capacity to house and serve special needs homeless families* during the next ten years. ☺

The “Supplemental Report: Families with Special Needs” was completed in July 2005 but has not yet been approved by the Multnomah County Board. Presentations will be made to both Portland City Council and Multnomah County Commission to request that they approve the report and incorporate it into adopted policy as part of the “Ten year Plan to End Homelessness.”

**Bridges to Housing**, which will provide housing and services to high resource using homeless families, has a Multnomah County commitment of \$1 million in funding for services. The Neighborhood Partnership Fund has been chosen as the administrative entity and foundation dollars are currently being solicited. The City of Portland has pledged \$1 million per year for five years for capital development of Bridges to Housing projects.

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**Needs Assessment for Unaccompanied Minors with Special Needs**

**Stated Goals**

...July 2003

*Assess number of extremely low-income unaccompanied minors with special needs in Multnomah County; identify their distinctive housing and service needs; identify resources.*

**Desired Outcomes**

...July 2003

*Make detailed recommendations for meeting the Housing & Services needs of this population. Integrate those recommendations into SNC Recommendations and, where appropriate, into 10 year Plan to End Homelessness.*

**Results**

...June 2006

It appears unclear whether there is the will, the need, or the resources needed to do a specific assessment of the needs of this population at this time. Other specific populations such as seniors have not been specifically assessed either. It is clear that the efforts described in this report that will continue when the SNC dissolves need to be committed to addressing all special needs populations in their ongoing work.

**Appendix I**  
**Permanent Supportive Housing Units Pipeline from April 2004 – May 2006**

<b>Developer</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Singles</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Cascadia	11th Emerson	4	0	4
Northwest Housing Alternatives	Headwaters	5	0	5
CPAH	Bertha Station	8	0	8
Catholic Charities	Kateri Park	10	0	10
Cascadia	Prescott Terrace/Always Welcome	15	0	15
Cascadia	Midland Commons	44	0	44
Central City Concern	Hotel Alder	49	0	49
Central City Concern	8 NW 8	60	0	60
Catholic Charities	Howard House	8	4	12
Transition Projects	Clark Center Annex	22	0	22
HAP	Civic/Morrison Apts.	45	0	45
Central City Concern	Rose Quarter	80	0	80
PCRI	Morris Green Plexes	0	1	1
Rose CDC	Leander Court	0	5	5
Hacienda CDC	Miraflores	0	5	5
Human Solutions	Lincoln Woods	0	14	14
Northwest Housing Alternatives	Weidler Commons	5	0	5
G & B Real Estate Services (private)	Pioneer Abodes	10	0	10
Innovative Housing Inc.	Bridgeview	12	0	12
Human Solutions	Greentree	0	11	11
PCRI	Urban League Plaza	0	9	9
Human Solutions	Raintree Apts.	0	15	15
Charles Iheanacho (private)	Roselyn Villa	0	1	1
Our House	Our House	2	0	2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>444</b>

## Appendix II Committees with missions that overlap the SNC

Committee Name & function	Status	Who is represented?	Staff	Reports to Whom
Citizens' Commission on Homelessness	On-going, meet 2x/year	Elected, business, Sheriff, Police, Meyer Foundation, HAP Board member, formerly homeless person	City (Heather Lyons, Ruth Benson)	Portland City Council, County Commission
Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness (PTEHCC): where the Continuum of Care and the 10 Year Plan come together	On-going, monthly	Staff to elected officials, BHCD staff, DSCP staff, HAP staff, County Human Services, Health Dept., homeless service providers, developers, United Way, homeless and formerly homeless people, advocates, Oregon Law Center	City (Sally Erickson, Ruth Benson)	Continuum of Care (McKinney) sub-group reports to HCDC  PTEHCC reports to CCOH
E-Comm (formerly the McKinney Advisory Committee), a sub-committee of HCDC	On-going.	HCDC Commissioners and other community representatives who do not have a conflict of interest.	City (Sally Erickson)	Reports to HCDC and PTEHCC.
Chronic Homelessness working group	Meets monthly	Homeless and formerly homeless people, advocates, community reps	Central City Concern	Oversight committee for ICH and HUD/DOL grants; CCEH
Housing & Services Partnership sub-committee	On hiatus, will be reconstituted if needed		Had been staffed by City	Housing and service agency staff
Pipeline/Funders Committee	Will begin 2006		Staffed by City (Andrea Sanchez)	Staff to Elected Officials
PSH Production Committee	Meets as needed with staff of agencies requesting funds for PSH. Certifies PSH projects seeking funding for capital, operations, or services	BHCD, Multnomah County	Andrea Sanchez of BHCD, Seth Lyon of Multnomah County	Pipeline/Funders Committee
CSH Grant team	Meets periodically	City and County staff	City (Heather Lyons), County (Diane Luther)	CSH
CDN PSH Project	Steering Committee meets monthly. Subcommittees include Legal, Regulatory, and Partnerships. Goal is to increase the supply of PSH by developing underwriting standards and financing models for PSH.	BHCD, CDN members, HDC. Will involve broader stakeholders including County, HAP, PDC as project moves forward.	City (Andy Miller), CDN (Sam Chase), Kris Smock, Consultant to City	CDN Board, BHCD
Bridges to Housing	B2H has become a project of the Neighborhood Partnership Fund. B2H has its own steering committee.	Clark, Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas Counties, housing providers, service providers, housing authorities, Vancouver Council for the Homeless, CDN, City of Portland and Vancouver.	Neighborhood Partnership Fund	Regional team composed of housing managers; individual jurisdictions.
AIDS Housing Committee	Meets regularly to work to increase the supply of supportive housing for PLWH/A	7 County Consortium	City (Dawn Martin)	BHCD, HCDC
Downtown Housing Occupancy Group	Meets monthly to update inventory and address barriers to full occupancy of downtown SRO by mostly homeless and special needs populations	Downtown service providers and managers of downtown buildings.	Staffed by Ruth Benson until April 2006. Now staffed by NWPP (Rebecca Childs)	Itself
SHIP (Street Homeless Issues and Progress)	Meets monthly to identify and eliminate barriers to housing the most chronically homeless and to track progress.	Providers of homeless services, police, others	City (Will White), County (Ray Hudson)	CCOH, Elected Officials

# Housing and Community Development Commission Special Needs Committee

## Participants

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Trell Anderson	Mary Li
E.V. Armitage	Diane Luther
Karen Barton	Heather Lyons
Neal Beroz	Seth Lyon
Karen Brown-Wilson	Tanya McGee
Mary Carroll	Roger Meyer
Rosanne Costanzo	Susan Montgomery
Peter Davidson	Terri Naito
Philip Deas	Ruth Pitts-London
Susan Dietsche	Marshall Runkel
Joyce Dougherty	Emily Schelling
Rachael Duke	Donna Shackelford
Tiffany Fleischer	Vicki Skryha
Joanne Fuller	Phyllis Spaulding
Bernie Giusto	Susan Stoltenberg
Leah Greenwood	Kim Tierney
Nancy Harp	Andree Tremoulet
Janet Hawkins	Bill Van Vliet
Ray Hudson	Will White
Liv Jenssen	Sherry Willmschen
Linda Kaeser	Nancy Wilton
Eric King	Jim Wrigley

*Housing and Community Development Commission  
Special Needs Committee  
June 2006*

